

A guide to home learning.....

Routine- Help children to keep routine continuing with the same bedtimes and get up time as normal.

If you have a school aged child pick a selection of clothes that can be their learning clothes (uniform) for during the week. Keep the weekdays for learning and the weekend for your family time.

Talk to your children use the poem we have sent out to help younger children understand.

If you don't already have them make some family rules together, make sure you stick to these as well as them and refer back to them when they are slipping.

Use a timetable where possible with the days of the week allocating time slots for learning but remember to build in breaks and lunch.

Get the kids involved in making it, they can colour it and decorate. Ideally keep it similar to what they are currently used to; for example, at nursery we have a snack at 10, lunch at 11:45 and a snack again at 3. You might want to change the time slightly but whatever you decide stick to the same thing throughout the week.

Put it up somewhere where everyone in the family can see.

Children thrive on routine but so do we as adults, it will help you feel better as well them.

Plan in exercise time- you can use the Joe Wicks videos on youtube, go for a walk remember to keep social distancing from others or look up other similar things you might want to try children's Yoga!

Remember that play is learning! Especially for nursery/younger children; for example, you might decide that between 9 and 10am you are going to get building bricks out. Model building something to them and then challenge them to make something similar.

Let them get messy! Fill a bowl with water and use utensils from the kitchen for them to fill and pour. They will have hours of fun and will be learning a lot from it too.

Involve the children in everyday tasks- This is the ideal opportunity to teach children basic life skills. Where possible get them involved in cooking, cleaning and general household tasks.

If you have a garden or have space to grow things inside get them growing vegetables etc they will love seeing them grow and then you can all enjoy them together once they are done.

Remember to build in breaks and free time both for you and your children. However, make sure these are set times and you don't fall into the trap of getting distracted and it going on too long.

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If this happens you will see an increase in negative behaviour at home.

Tips on supporting behaviour-

- **Reward charts/cards** – Many children respond well to this as it gives them both a visual and physical thing they can go back to. The key to it is keeping up to it and rewarding every little positive thing the child does. For young children just a sticker on the chart may be enough but for older children they may need to see a reward at the end of it. (Try to stick to something that doesn't cost i.e. playing a game together or a trip to the park).
- **Praise** – Praise the good and ignore the negative. This cannot be applied to all situations, so it is important that you identify the effectiveness of this strategy through observations. Concentrating on positive behaviour will allow a child to focus on what is expected rather than what is not.
- **Be positive** – Use positive behaviour management techniques and rules by asking for the behaviour you would like to see rather than identifying the behaviour you wouldn't like to see. For example, instead of 'No running' ask for 'walking inside please'
- **Use visual sand timers and five-minute warnings** – This is useful for children who are struggling with transition times. Remember Young children do not have the same sense of time that we do so giving them a visual clue like a sand timer or countdown clock is essential to re-enforce the time.
- **Remove anything which can cause harm** – If you have a child who lashes out, remove any other children from the situation and if they are likely to throw objects calmly remove these from the child's reach.
- **Be consistent** – Try one approach and stick with it

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- **Use visual timetables** – Again another strategy for a child who is struggling with routine or transition times. Show them using visual images what is going to happen throughout the day and next.
- **Stay calm** – Sometimes when dealing with challenging behaviour the situation can become over whelming, it is okay. Take a step back and give count to ten we all find it difficult at times.
- **Create picture cards of regular events** – These can be carried around on a key ring. These can then be showed to a child wherever you are.
- **Time out**– Where possible ensure the child has a safe space to express their emotions and let of steam.
- **Time in**- Remember children seek attention form those that they feel secure with, create regular times of one to one positive to help fulfil that need for the attention in a positive way.
- **Firm No:** This one is key for behaviours that must be stopped immediately, like biting or hitting, As soon as your child bites or hits (or seems like she's about to), get down on her level, hold her arms gently to her sides so she can't lash out. Don't get caught up in the whys of not hitting people, because a toddler has a short attention span. Just stick to the message and be consistent.
- **Distract.** Instead of trying to talk your child down from a temper tantrum, sometimes the best course of action is simply to shift the focus to something else.
- **Change a “no” to a “yes.”** Imagine your toddler is throwing blocks. Instead of saying “don't throw blocks,” change the focus to what he *can* do. Saying something like, ‘I see you want to throw. Should we go outside and throw a ball?’ positively shifts their behaviour while teaching what is and isn't acceptable behaviour.

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- **Get dramatic.** If a toddler is throwing a tantrum because you're leaving the park, mimic her emotions. Don't mock her, but say, 'I know you're mad about leaving the park. I am too! But we have to go home. Not only are you helping her put words to the big emotions she's feeling, but you're also showing her it's okay to feel a range of emotions.
- **Choose your battles-** While it is important to stand your ground, you also have to remember to choose your battles wisely. Of course, there are rules that must be followed, like holding your hand in a parking lot and not running with scissors; but there are times when the rules can be bent a little. For example, if your child wants to wear a different shirt than the one you have picked out, let him. He'll be happier – and so will you!

Above all enjoy the time you have together, stay safe and take care.